

Message Text

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10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 MC-02 /084 W

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R 310702Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3696

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5374

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS

SUBJECT: JEUNE AFRIQUE REPORT ON GULF STATE FINANCING OF
TUNISIAN MILITARY PURCHASES

1. JULY 23 ISSUE OF PARIS-BASED, FRENCH-LANGUAGE WEEKLY
JEUNE AFRIQUE CARRIED BRIEF REPORT THAT PETROLEUM STATES
OF THE GULF FORESEE AIDING TUNISIA IN COMPLETING ITS
ARMAMENT, " AS THEY DID LAST YEAR FOR MOROCCO." THE
ARTICLE ALSO REPORTED THAT AMX-13 TANKS WOULD BE BOUGHT
FROM FRANCE AND A SQUADRON OF F-5'S WOULD BE ORDERED
FROM THE U.S. GOT BLOCKED SALE OF JA ISSUE CARRYING
THIS REPORT FOR ONE WEEK WHILE OFFICIALS DECIDED
WHETHER IT WOULD BE RELEASED ON LOCAL MARKET. IT
WAS LATER RELEASED.

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2. JA BUREAU CHIEF IN TUNIS TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER THAT REPORT CAME FROM PARIS AND HE COULD PROVIDE NO INDICATION OF SOURCE. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT "EVERYONE IN TUNIS" KNOWS IT IS TRUE AND HE CONSIDERED THAT JA WOULD NOT HAVE PUBLISHED IT UNLESS IT WAS SURE OF ITS AUTHENTICITY. EMBASSY, HOWEVER, HAS NO HARD INFORMATION CONFIRMING THIS REPORT.

3. APPEARANCE OF JA WITH THIS REPORT COINCIDES WITH INCREASED TENSION BETWEEN TUNISIA AND LIBYA. WHETHER GOT IS GETTING GULF STATE FINANCING FOR ARMS PURCHASES OR NOT, IT PROBABLY DOES NOT MIND LETTING LIBYA THINK THAT IT IS ABOUT TO HAVE THE FUNDS NECESSARY TO BUY AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE SYSTEM, AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, THAT GOT HAS POLITICAL SUPPORT OF GULF STATES WHO ARE WILLING TO BACK UP SUPPORT WITH CASH.
MULCAHY

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